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Chairman: Mr. MacKay ..... (New Zealand)
Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Kuznetsov

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The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Agenda item 123: Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (*continued*)

Report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the evaluation of the United Nations Volunteers Programme (A/59/68 and Add.1 and A/59/736)

1. **Mr. Gorita** (Chairman of the Joint Inspection Unit), introducing via videoconference from Geneva the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the evaluation of the United Nations Volunteers Programme (A/59/68), said that the Unit had evaluated the administrative and management structure and methods of the Programme with a view to recommending improvements to ensure the most efficient use of resources. Overall, the Programme had been considered dynamic and able to rapidly respond to changing and expanded demands. It was also committed to continuous improvement. The Unit's recommendations ranged from increasing the number of volunteers from underrepresented developing countries to reviewing conditions of service and seeking a clear definition of volunteers' privileges and immunities. Some had taken the view that the idea of volunteerism could be undermined by the expectation of financial gain or the idea that volunteers were a "cheap labour" alternative to United Nations staff.

2. The Unit had recommended that the Programme should focus on a reduced number of priority activities, use results-based budgeting, find ways to measure and present the results of its activities and establish a regular oversight cycle. The Programme's managers and the Secretary-General had welcomed the findings, and the Advisory Committee had made recommendations coinciding with those of the Unit itself, particularly regarding the participation of volunteers in peacekeeping operations.

3. **Mr. de Raad** (Executive Coordinator of the United Nations Volunteers Programme), introducing the comments of the Secretary-General (A/59/68/Add.1), said that those comments focused on the involvement of volunteers in peacekeeping operations and on the observations of the Advisory Committee.

4. Cooperation between the United Nations Volunteers Programme and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations was good, and had grown over the years. The global memorandum of understanding between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the United Nations Development Programme (on behalf of the United Nations Volunteers Programme), signed on 18 December 2003, had been a landmark in that relationship. Volunteers had become involved at the early stages of peacekeeping operations and, serving as election observers and human rights officers, for example, complemented other United Nations staff.

5. The memorandum of understanding had addressed issues raised by the Joint Inspection Unit and the Advisory Committee, such as the parameters for volunteers' involvement in peacekeeping operations and their privileges and immunities, which were the same as those of other staff. Problems were rare and could be resolved by ensuring that the volunteers' terms of reference provided a solid management structure and defined lines of accountability. One remaining difficulty was that of issuing volunteers with United Nations laissez-passer. Resolving it would greatly help the work of the volunteers, particularly from the standpoint of travel, including emergency travel.

6. A regular cycle of reviews of the Programme's activities had been suggested. As the United Nations Volunteers Programme was administered by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), it was subject to the same administrative and oversight arrangements, which included an obligation to report on activities every two years.

Agenda item 106: Financial reports and audited financial statements, and reports of the Board of Auditors (*continued*) (A/59/5 (Vol. II) and Corr.1, A/59/704 and A/59/736)

7. **Mr. Cabatuan** (Chairman of the Audit Operations Committee of the United Nations Board of Auditors) said that he was encouraged by the General Assembly's use of the Board of Auditors reports as a source of information and recognized that their format and content could be improved. With regard to peacekeeping operations, the Board would try to strike a balance between financial and management audits, as the Advisory Committee suggested. He wished to point out that prioritizing the implementation of recommendations was principally in the hands of the Administration.

Agenda item 123: Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (*continued*)

Support account for peacekeeping operations (*continued*) (A/58/767; A/59/714 and Add.1, A/59/730 and A/59/784)

United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi (*continued*) (A/59/681, A/59/691, A/59/701, A/59/703 and A/59/736 and Add.2)

Procurement and contract management of peacekeeping operations (*continued*) (A/58/761; A/59/688 and A/59/722)

Communication and information technology (continued) (A/58/740; A/59/736)

Training policy and evaluation system (*continued*) (A/58/753; A/59/736)

Recruitment (*continued*) (A/57/787; A/58/764 and A/58/765; A/59/736 and A/59/763)

Reformed procedures for determining reimbursement to Member States for contingent-owned equipment (*continued*) (A/C.5/58/37 and Corr.1; A/59/292, A/59/708 and A/59/736)

Staffing of field missions, including the use of 300 and 100 series appointments (*continued*) (A/59/736 and A/59/762)

Reports of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (*continued*)

Regional investigators (*continued*) (A/59/546)

Global audit of field security management (*continued*) (A/59/702)

Mission subsistence allowance (*continued*) (A/59/698 and Add.1)

General report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the report of the Board of Auditors and on the administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (*continued*) (A/59/736)

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Feasibility of consolidating the accounts of the various peacekeeping operations (*continued*) (A/59/795)

Agenda item 125: Financing of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (*continued*) (A/59/736/Add.8 and A/59/751)

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Agenda item 132: Financing of the activities arising from Security Council resolution 687 (1991) (*continued*)

(a) United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (*continued*) (A/59/614 and A/59/736/Add.14)

Agenda item 133: Financing of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (*continued*) (A/59/623 and Corr.1, A/59/633 and A/59/736/Add.1)

Agenda item 134: Financing of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (*continued*) (A/59/624, A/59/630 and A/59/736/Add.11)

Agenda item 135: Financing of the United Nations peacekeeping forces in the Middle East (*continued*)

(a) United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (*continued*) (A/59/625, A/59/653 and Corr.1 and 2 and A/59/736/Add.4)

(b) United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (*continued*) (A/59/626, A/59/654 and A/59/736/Add.3)

Agenda item 136: Financing of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (*continued*) (A/59/635 and Corr.1, A/59/736/Add.9, A/59/758 and Corr.1 and A/59/759)

Agenda item 137: Financing of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (*continued*) (A/59/619, A/59/629 and A/59/736/Add.5)

8. **Mr. van den Bossche** (Belgium), speaking on behalf of the European Union, the acceding countries Bulgaria and Romania, the candidate country Turkey, the stabilization and association process countries Albania and Serbia and Montenegro, and, in addition, Iceland, said that United Nations peacekeeping operations faced many challenges ranging from an increase in the number, size and complexity of missions to damaging allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse against peacekeepers and field personnel. The peacekeeping budget, moreover, had risen to $5 billion a year and was placing enormous pressure on all Member States.

9. The European Union was pleased that the Secretariat had used results-based budgeting, provided more focused and specific indicators of achievement and established a clearer link between resources, expected accomplishments and outputs. The Secretariat should consider aligning peacekeeping budgets more closely with their objectives to improve presentation and facilitate monitoring.

10. The Union was deeply disappointed that the report on the review of the management structure of all peacekeeping operations requested in General Assembly decision 59/507 for submission to the Assembly at the second part of its resumed fifty-ninth session was unlikely to be presented until the second part of its resumed sixtieth session. While acknowledging the demands placed on the Secretariat, it was unreasonable to expect Member States to approve $5 billion of resources for peacekeeping operations without such a review. The Secretariat should at least supply basic information to help the Committee's decision-making.

11. The European Union was concerned that a number of management problems identified by the Board of Auditors and the Advisory Committee persisted and that the growing delay in the payment of assessed contributions was affecting the Organization's ability to meet its financial obligations.

12. The General Assembly had already acknowledged the importance of cross-cutting issues that affected all peacekeeping operations and the European Union was keen to explore those commonalities, which should result in the adoption of a resolution during the current session of the Assembly that addressed those policy issues.

13. While not advocating a rigid mathematical formula, the European Union reiterated its view that the level of the support account for peacekeeping operations must be commensurate with the number and size of active peacekeeping missions. The increase in the number of missions notwithstanding, some support account posts had not been justified in detail and appeared to duplicate existing Secretariat structures in certain areas, including information technology, training and recruitment. Furthermore, the support account seemed not to reflect the downsizing of missions or gains from investment in information technology and training. The European Union wondered whether such matters had been considered when establishing the support account budget.

14. The European Union supported the concept of integrated peacekeeping missions, which would encourage a system-wide approach to all aspects of peacekeeping and increase efficiency, but it could see no clear delineation on the ground between the functions of the social and humanitarian pillar of peacekeeping operations and the activities of the funds and programmes. It acknowledged that such matters were part of a broader policy debate, but would appreciate guidance from the Secretariat and Advisory Committee on the humanitarian and peacebuilding activities of peacekeeping operations.

15. Having played an active role in the discussions of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, which had recommended the establishment of an independent investigative capacity to cope with allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse, the European Union was disappointed that the statement of the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.4/59/L.20 on the comprehensive review on a strategy to eliminate future sexual exploitation and abuse in United Nations peacekeeping operations (A/C.5/59/28) had not made adequate provision for such a capacity. Discussions on the matter should be rapidly brought to a close and the Secretariat should explain to the Committee what resources were needed and how responsibilities would be divided between the

Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

16. The Secretariat should conclude negotiations with the Government of Italy on the enlargement of the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, so that the first stage of the expansion plan could be financed. The new facilities could be used for training, short-term staff accommodation, strategic deployment stocks storage and other purposes.

17. The European Union remained a steadfast supporter of United Nations peacekeeping operations. It not only provided troops for United Nations missions but also trained and equipped other peacekeepers, such as those of the African Union, and provided a rapid deployment capacity. However, as the group contributing the most funds, it expected all peacekeeping operations to be efficiently run, budgets to focus on real needs and expenditure on information technology and training to produce demonstrable returns in terms of improved efficiency and performance, while still respecting the mandates established by the Security Council.

18. **Mr. Meyer** (Brazil), speaking on behalf of the Rio Group, said that the Group attached great importance to the examination of those issues that had a direct impact on all existing and future peacekeeping operations.

19. Policies should be implemented across all peacekeeping mission budgets with a view to improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the management process and the performance of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in the execution of legislative mandates. Resources allocated should be used in accordance with the financial and administrative mechanisms established in the mandates of the General Assembly.

20. The Group was concerned at the shortcomings in the implementation of the air safety monitoring mechanism and in visits to registered air transportation companies. The lack of ongoing cooperation between the various missions and Headquarters in the area of rations management was another matter for concern.

21. While there was a need to finalize guidelines for the implementation of basic standards of conduct for United Nations employees, the establishment of Personnel Conduct Units might lead to the duplication of functions and an increased financial burden.

22. Procurement policies should apply to suppliers from all regions and should be geared towards increasing the participation of suppliers from developing countries.

23. The policies and procedures related to rotation and replenishment of strategic deployment stocks should be respected and every effort made to achieve homogeneity in the planning of air transportation in peacekeeping operations and to avoid existing discrepancies.

24. Human resources planning should be adequately managed in order to avoid duplication and an excessive proportion of higher category posts, thereby ensuring an accurate classification of posts.

25. In order to implement effective training policies and to promote better budgetary management of training-related travel needs, an adequate and coordinated use of the methodological elements and technological resources available was needed. Discrepancies in the criteria for procuring and replenishing ground transportation vehicles were a cause for concern. The Group was also concerned that the Galileo field assets control system had not been extended to all missions. A cost-benefit analysis was needed to determine the feasibility of using the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi to provide information technology and communication services that could lower mission costs. Full implementation of the information technology and communication strategy adopted by the General Assembly was also essential in order to avoid unnecessary redundancies.

26. **Ms. Buchanan** (New Zealand), speaking also on behalf of Canada and Australia, stressed the importance of the measures that had been recommended to strengthen the integrity, competitiveness and sound management of the procurement system and to improve the access of local and non-local suppliers. While many practical measures had been taken to improve the process and reduce lead times, some important measures were still awaited, including the issuance of ethical guidelines for procurement personnel.

27. The delegations on whose behalf she spoke were strong advocates of training and investment in people. The United Nations had important training responsibilities that went beyond its own staff to include support for the efforts of countries supplying troops and police. It therefore needed a clear training

policy and strategy that would define the clients, desired outcomes, operating methods, resource needs and evaluation methods. Such a context was essential to enable understanding of important proposals to create new capacities, such as the proposed training cell in Brindisi. The report on the training policy and evaluation system of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (A/58/753), while a step in the right direction, offered little information on the lessons that were in fact being learned and more was needed than broad principles and priorities. The report, moreover, noted that there were multiple training structures based on the type of personnel served. Although training had various clients, the merits of adopting a unified approach to the provision of training services should be examined.

28. Since the Secretary-General had indicated that the current peacekeeping human resources management model, which was based on people coming and going for one mission at a time, was not suited to current needs, he now needed to articulate an alternative approach for consideration by the General Assembly. Conditions of service were a key part of the equation. The Assembly had already mandated for its sixty-first session comprehensive reports on harmonizing conditions of service or creating a peacekeeping stream. In the interim, the Secretary-General must be able to continue to reappoint needed staff from 300 series contracts to 100 series contracts, as outlined in resolution 59/266.

29. There was no basis for changing the character or purpose of the mission subsistence allowance, which should be seen as precisely that and not as a tool to compensate for difficulty of life or hardship. While those other factors were important, compensatory mechanisms already existed for some staff. Furthermore, issues related to compensation should be addressed in the wider context of conditions of service as a whole rather than through such a limited tool as the mission subsistence allowance.

30. More timely recruitment and placement was essential and the further use of rosters based on generic vacancy announcements should accelerate that process. Regulatory or procedural impediments to making such appointments should be identified and referred, if necessary, to the General Assembly for action.

31. There was need for increased use of national personnel in field missions. More innovative and dynamic measures should be taken by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Office of Human Resources Management within the existing rules. Too limited a concept of capacity-building seemed to apply. In addition, the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) needed to review, as a matter of priority, archaic limitations on the use of national officers.

32. The support account was a budgetary concept not a programme. As such, it provided primarily for administrative functions carried out jointly by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Management. To go beyond considering whether any particular additional post was required, it would first be necessary to consider whether the way the work was done was in fact efficient. To that end, reviews should be initiated with the support of OIOS.

33. The delegations on whose behalf she spoke strongly supported the two main ideas reflected in the Secretary-General's proposed response to the issues of sexual exploitation and abuse, namely, strengthening capacity to ensure appropriate personal conduct by personnel in the field and strengthening the investigative capacity of OIOS. It was imperative for the Secretary-General to clarify how the whole spectrum of personal conduct functions would work, including the role of OIOS in conducting investigations.

34. In addition to tackling sexual exploitation and abuse, peacekeeping operations also needed to more broadly address the gender dimensions of their work. To that end, all peacekeepers should undergo the gender training offered by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

35. The Peacekeeping Best Practices Unit was an important centre of innovation and its assumption of operational functions should be managed in a way that would not diminish its role as a think-tank. It was also important to ensure the sound functioning of the Civilian Police Division.

36. One of the most difficult cross-cutting issues was perhaps the functioning of the integrated mission concept. While their delegations were open to the argument that a robust strategic planning capacity and the creation of Joint Mission Analysis Cells could strengthen integration and common purpose within missions, the case needed to be made more comprehensively. It was surprising that there was still

no policy on the Cells, given that several had been proposed.

37. The lack of funding from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for the second Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General function was a matter of concern. The fact that a report on the mission structure, which might have informed a discussion on the role of donor coordination within the structure of missions, was not available was also disappointing.

38. The continuum of disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, humanitarian and development work was clearly vital in many missions. However, who did what and who paid for what remained unclear. The possible use of assessed budgets for the delivery of what had traditionally been project implementation merited policy discussion, including information on why that function might no longer be considered a donor-funded activity in some contexts.

39. The additional demands placed on peacekeeping did not lessen expectations for peacekeeping resources to be robustly justified and for missions to be well managed. Owing to the scope of peacekeeping activities, their delegations put added focus on generic management policy issues and would therefore pay particular attention to the proposed draft resolution on cross-cutting issues.

40. **Mr. Kozaki** (Japan) said that since the proposed budget for 2005-2006 was expected to reach an unprecedented level, his Government was paying closer attention to whether it was justified and whether the Secretary-General had developed a management mechanism to ensure the effective and efficient use of Member States' resources.

41. He regretted the fact that neither the report on the review of the management structure of all peacekeeping operations, which had been requested by the General Assembly in its decision 59/507, nor an overview report concerning the financing of peacekeeping operations had been submitted to the Assembly at its current session. Those reports would have afforded the Secretary-General a good opportunity to explain to Member States his commitment to more efficient and effective management of peacekeeping operations at Headquarters and in the field.

42. The Advisory Committee's report on the administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations, and on the report of the Board of Auditors (A/59/736) provided very informative views on cross-cutting and management policy issues relating to peacekeeping operations, while the report of the Board of Auditors (A/59/5 (Vol. II)) also provided a high quality of analysis on management issues. The recommendations of both bodies should be followed up and implemented without delay to ensure that assessed contributions were efficiently utilized.

43. The General Assembly should accept the recommendation of the Advisory Committee contained in document A/59/736 and provide clear guidance to the Secretary-General on the management of peacekeeping operations. Since Member States needed to see concrete results, the Secretary-General should report on the implementation of the decisions made and on the results achieved in his forthcoming overview report.

44. His delegation intended to pursue discipline in the budgets of individual missions, while paying due attention to the operating requirements of each mission. Since many shared issues were management-related, it was essential for the Fifth Committee to tackle cross-cutting issues in order to discharge its responsibilities on budgetary and management matters. His delegation would actively participate in the discussion on the cross-cutting resolution, which would be a prerequisite for approving the proposed budget of each individual mission.

45. The Secretariat's tendency to use the budgets of the peacekeeping operations to introduce initiatives with policy implications was a matter of concern. The Secretary-General should seek decisions on policy matters from the General Assembly in order to maintain budgetary discipline and efficient resource management in the Secretariat.

46. The concept of integrated and complex peacekeeping missions was welcome, since close cooperation was essential for the most efficient and effective use of available resources. However, assessed peacekeeping contributions should not be used for activities traditionally funded through voluntary contributions.

47. The Secretary-General's proposal to convert a number of posts in several missions would require careful study. His delegation looked forward to receiving a full explanation with a view to ensuring the justified and transparent management of posts.

48. His delegation noted with interest that the rate of increase in the budget of the support account was far greater than that of the total budget of peacekeeping operations. It fully agreed with the Advisory Committee that the efficiency and effectiveness of the management process at Headquarters and in the field needed to be regularly reviewed before additional resources were requested. Every effort should be made to justify not only new resource requirements but also the totality of resources. While a peacekeeping mission might sometimes require new functions, that did not automatically justify the establishment of new posts. Instead, existing functions and resources first needed to be reviewed and redeployed with full coordination between missions and departments at Headquarters.

49. **Ms. Attwooll** (United States of America) said that, in order to expedite the Committee's work, her delegation would make only one statement on peacekeeping issues. She would therefore touch on a number of matters in addition to those on the agenda for the current meeting.

50. She paid tribute to the peacekeeping personnel who had lost their lives in the service of the United Nations. The firm commitment of the United States to peacekeeping was evidenced by her delegation's support and advocacy for mission mandates in the Security Council. Because of that commitment it also sought to identify and correct deficiencies in the management of peacekeeping so as to build stronger, more effective operations. That was particularly important in the light of the recent surge in peacekeeping activity, which had put a great strain on the Organization. Regrettably, the United Nations was not in a position to meet the new challenges it faced in the area of peacekeeping because of weak management, misconduct and a lack of accountability. Simply creating more jobs was not the answer to those problems.

51. With regard to individual peacekeeping missions, the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) was to be commended on its modernization programme, which had streamlined the Force's infrastructure and logistics support and improved communications facilities. The experience gained and lessons learned from the programme should be shared with all missions.

52. Her delegation would appreciate information on the cost to the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) of administering staff away on temporary duty assignment to other missions. It also wished to know if there were standard guidelines for determining whether to charge such staff to their parent duty station or to the mission to which they were temporarily assigned.

53. The failure of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) to submit a fully justified budget for consideration by the Committee at the second part of the resumed session indicated a lack of direction on the part of management. That was regrettable, since the immense size and complexity of the Mission made it essential to have strong leadership and clear management strategies and accountability systems in place. Her delegation was also concerned about the proposal to establish a personnel conduct unit under the Mission's humanitarian pillar, rather than in the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. Given the appalling sexual abuse that had taken place at the Mission, there was a need to send a clear signal that misconduct would not be tolerated.

54. The proposed budget for the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) contained a provision of $4.6 million for what were termed disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programmes but in fact entailed only reintegration activities. While her delegation fully supported the concept of DDR and recognized its role in peacebuilding, it believed that the reintegration element of such programmes should be conducted and funded by United Nations system agencies, funds and programmes rather than by peacekeeping missions, which had other competing priorities.

55. On issues of a more overarching nature, the proposal to convert some personnel on special service or individual contractor agreements to national General Service staff was an attempt to establish new posts through the back door. Her delegation welcomed the information provided by the Advisory Committee on the functions of the 64 individual contractors proposed for conversion at the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi (A/59/736/Add.2, annex IV). However, in the

interests of transparency, the Secretariat should have provided similar information for UNDOF and UNIFIL.

56. The rate of increase in the budget for the support account was far greater than that of the budgets for peacekeeping missions. A total of 110 additional posts had been requested for the support account, yet no information was provided on the redeployment of posts dedicated to closed or downsized missions or on efforts to coordinate with other Secretariat departments in order to avoid duplication. Her delegation questioned the need for the additional posts, particularly taking into account the efficiencies expected following investments in information technology and the anticipated delegation of authority to the field. Many rejustified posts appeared to duplicate the functions of existing posts. Furthermore, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations did not seem able to distinguish between functions that were essential for good mission management and those that were merely desirable. The failure to provide a report on the management structure review requested by the General Assembly reflected a lack of vision on the part of managers in some of the larger and newer missions, where it was most needed.

57. Her delegation wished to know what amount of mission resources had been used to finance the posts of Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General in charge of the humanitarian pillar. The lack of a formal agreement with UNDP regarding the funding of those posts reflected a more general failure to achieve a clear division of responsibilities between peacekeeping missions and United Nations system agencies in the field and raised questions about the role, functioning and effectiveness of the humanitarian pillar. Her delegation was especially concerned about the use of assessed contributions to fund humanitarian activities, which took away the incentive for Member States to honour their voluntary pledges. While her delegation supported the inclusion of a humanitarian component in complex missions, it questioned whether that function could fulfil its mandate as currently structured.

58. With regard to sexual exploitation and abuse, her delegation noted with satisfaction that the report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and its Working Group at the 2005 substantive session (A/59/19) was the first step towards creating an institutional culture of zero tolerance. It also welcomed the proposal in the budget of the support account for peacekeeping operations for 2005/2006 (A/59/730) to increase the capacity of the Investigations Division of OIOS. There was a need to educate mission personnel about the code of conduct and to establish a focal point for reporting of allegations. Her delegation looked forward to discussing the role of Personnel Conduct Units in that regard.

59. The ongoing cooperation between MONUC and the United Nations Operation in Burundi (ONUB) was most welcome. It would be interesting to learn about other areas of cooperation between missions, particularly in West Africa. The experience gained and lessons learned should be shared and increased mission cooperation encouraged.

60. Lastly, in the next four weeks, the Committee was due to consider and take action on nearly 150 reports. The situation was unmanageable and had been exacerbated by the late issuance of documentation. The Committee was simply unable to give the items on its agenda the careful consideration they deserved. She therefore looked forward to working with other delegations to find a reasonable way forward.

61. **Ms. Wang** Xinxia (China) said she also agreed with previous speakers that both a management review of peacekeeping activities and an overview report concerning the financing of peacekeeping operations should have been submitted.

62. Her delegation had taken note of the Advisory Committee's report contained in document A/59/736 and hoped that it would help peacekeeping operations to enhance their level of management and effective utilization of peacekeeping resources. In that respect, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations should provide its full cooperation to ensure the smooth running of the audit process.

63. For the period ended 30 June 2003, 38 per cent of the audit recommendations had been implemented, 48 per cent were under implementation and 14 per cent had not been implemented. In that connection, her delegation supported the recommendation of the Advisory Committee that the relevant departments or organs should provide time frames for implementation of the recommendations, including specific actions to be taken and external factors that might hamper full implementation.

64. She noted with concern cases of serious non-compliance with administrative instructions, which had

led to overexpenditure. Those problems should be addressed without delay.

65. She welcomed the comments of the Advisory Committee in its report on the support account (A/59/784) and noted that the level of the account had increased by 217 per cent over the previous six years and that there had been a large corresponding increase in human resource capacity in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. Her delegation agreed with the Advisory Committee that, in the presentation of the requirements for the support account, every effort should be made to justify the totality of resources. The increase in requirements could not be delinked from an assessment of the management processes. The utilization of information and communication technology, the training of personnel and the adoption of new management methods should enhance efficiency and increase savings.

66. Her delegation welcomed the request for the Board of Auditors to review the evolution of the support account and its departure from its original concept. Such a study would be useful if it helped Member States to better understand the real needs of the support account.

67. **Ms. Kang** Kyung-wha (Republic of Korea) said that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts were to be commended for their efforts to deal with the recent surge in peacekeeping activities, which had placed a great strain on the Secretariat. Her delegation was concerned, however, about the unevenness in the quality of presentation of the budget proposals of the various peacekeeping missions. With clearer guidance and leadership from Headquarters, greater standardization could be achieved.

68. Overall expenditure on peacekeeping was expected to exceed $5 billion in 2005/2006, which would result in huge increases in Member States' assessed contributions. It was therefore imperative to address the chaotic situation in the administration and financing of peacekeeping operations. Her delegation welcomed the Advisory Committee's recommendations in that regard and was counting on it to play an active role in fostering greater consistency and efficiency. There must also be a concerted effort, both in missions and at Headquarters, to carry out peacekeeping mandates as cost-effectively as possible. In 2003/2004, the level of unpaid peacekeeping assessments had increased by 41 per cent. In order to prevent an even larger increase in the next budget cycle, the Secretariat must demonstrate that every effort was being made to avoid unnecessary costs. That would also enhance the overall effectiveness of peacekeeping operations.

69. Her delegation shared the Advisory Committee's concerns about the problem of top-heavy administrative structures, particularly in complex integrated missions. It was dismayed that, in some cases, little thought was being given to streamlining and rationalizing structures and to reassessing the need for a number of higher level posts. Greater attention should be paid to the matter at Headquarters. In that connection, the failure to report on the review of the management structure of all peacekeeping operations was regrettable.

70. The overbudgeting of air transportation requirements demonstrated a lack of financial responsibility. Significant savings could be made by expanding inter-agency cooperation in the use of air assets, while the Department of Peacekeeping Operations should continue its efforts to regionalize air operations.

71. Her delegation recognized the need for additional posts to be established under the support account in the light of the expansion of peacekeeping activities. However, it agreed with the Advisory Committee that the support account had evolved well beyond what had been originally foreseen and that it would be helpful to review the changes in the use of the support account mechanism and consider the most appropriate structure for it in the future.

72. The importance of United Nations humanitarian activities in post-conflict situations could not be overstated. Nevertheless, her delegation was concerned about the use of peacekeeping assessments to fund activities that were traditionally financed through voluntary contributions. In complex integrated missions, it might be difficult to keep peacekeeping and humanitarian activities entirely separate. However, the issue should be clarified with guidance from the General Assembly.

73. Her delegation was encouraged by the report of OIOS on the first year of experience of regional investigators in two hubs, Vienna and Nairobi (A/59/546). It supported the conclusion of OIOS that a combination of regional and resident investigators would be the most effective approach to meeting the

demand for immediate action in significant cases in field operations. The investigation into allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse by civilian and uniformed personnel in MONUC had demonstrated the effectiveness of that approach. Swift investigations were the first step towards re-establishing the credibility of United Nations peacekeeping operations, and the good start made at MONUC should be maintained.

74. **Mr. Simancas** (Mexico) said that the Government of Mexico had made a great effort to meet its financial commitments to peacekeeping operations and it therefore expected strict financial discipline and the implementation of spending controls with regard to peacekeeping operations.

75. His delegation shared the concerns about the tendency on the part of the Administration to use the budgets of the peacekeeping operations to introduce initiatives with policy implications, rather than first seeking the necessary policy guidance from the General Assembly. It also regretted that the report requested by the Assembly in decision 59/507 had not been submitted, particularly in the light of the unprecedented budget.

76. **Mr. Pisagih** (Nigeria), speaking on behalf of the African Group on the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), said that the Mission was a flagship operation staffed by dedicated men and women. The Group had therefore been saddened to learn of the deaths of Mission personnel from Lassa fever. It was deeply concerned about the increased incidence of the disease and would welcome an assurance that every effort was being made to address the situation. It also trusted that all pending disability cases would be settled expeditiously.

77. Concerning the performance report on the budget of the Mission for 2003/2004 (A/59/653), the Group welcomed the savings realized, the low number of death and disability cases and the lower than budgeted vacancy rate. It was concerned, however, about the continued exodus of well-trained staff during the critical drawdown phase. The Group had called, at the main part of the session, for the introduction of mechanisms to curb that phenomenon. It was therefore alarmed that the high turnover of staff at UNAMSIL had continued. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations should ensure that the Mission maintained appropriate levels of experienced staff.

78. With regard to the budget for UNAMSIL for 2005/2006 (A/59/758), the amount requested was reasonable and should be approved. The Group supported the decision to prepare a budget in two parts, covering an initial six-month maintenance period and a subsequent six-month liquidation phase. The clear and transparent results-based presentation was also welcome. It was important, during the drawdown phase, to give proper attention to oversight functions. Regrettably, not all of the posts allocated to OIOS for UNAMSIL had been filled. The Group wished to know why those posts remained unencumbered and when they would be filled.

79. The downsizing of the Mission had proceeded more rapidly than anticipated. While the security situation remained calm, the exit strategy must be guided by the need to preserve the gains made, and every effort must be made to maintain sufficient capacity for rapid response in UNAMSIL. Lastly, he reiterated that peace and security could be sustained only with economic and social development.

80. **Ms. Poku** (Ghana), speaking on behalf of the African Group on the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), said that the performance report on the Mission's budget for the period from 1 August 2003 to 30 June 2004 (A/59/624) had given Member States an insight into the activities carried out by the Mission in its start-up phase. While the Mission had been able to carry out some of the activities that it had planned under its indicators of achievement, it had deferred others because of delays in the recruitment of Mission staff.

81. The high vacancy rates affected the Mission's capacity to deal with the humanitarian and human rights objectives listed under component 2 of the report and consequently Liberia's ability to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms and to achieve national reconciliation. The Group would welcome information on planned activities that had been delayed and on current international and national staff incumbency rates. The African Group noted with interest paragraphs 118 to 122 of the report of the Board of Auditors on the administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (A/59/736), which dealt with the Galaxy system. The system must be urgently improved and greater efforts made to address the vacancy rate problem.

82. On the issue of coordination among missions in the subregion, the Group was pleased with the cooperation between UNMIL and UNAMSIL and noted that, owing to the downsizing of UNAMSIL, UNMIL had had to establish offices of its own in Accra, Ghana and Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. The Group hoped that UNMIL and other peacekeeping operations would nevertheless be guided by lessons learned and best practices from UNAMSIL and trusted that the Peacekeeping Best Practices Unit would work towards that end. It also hoped that future results-based budgeting by the Advisory Committee would be clearer and more transparent.

83. With regard to the Secretary-General's proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006, the African Group welcomed the request for $722,633,600 and had noted the Advisory Committee's recommendation for a reduction of $211,500 in the proposed budget of UNMIL. It had also noted the concern expressed by the Advisory Committee that the current proposed medical budget was $1,035,300 lower than the 2004-05 budget appropriation. The African Group was perplexed at the ambitious signal that such a proposed budget would send, especially given that the clear and present danger of contagious diseases, such as Lassa fever, cerebral malaria and typhoid fever, suggested the need for increased rather than reduced resources. The Group would appreciate further clarification on that matter.

84. Of concern as well were the 19 reported cases of psychological stress disorder, including suicides, which indicated seriously low staff morale. The Group would like to know what immediate steps were being taken by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to address that crisis. The physical and psychological well-being of staff should be of paramount importance. The Group therefore urged the Department to take immediate steps to address the factors that contributed to such low morale and to brief the General Assembly accordingly.

85. The African Group was also concerned by the sudden departure of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs from Liberia, leaving UNMIL to assume its functions. In addition, it was concerned about the potential shortfall in the $40 million that was urgently needed for the rehabilitation and reintegration programmes for ex-combatants. Because any shortfall could jeopardize such programmes, the Group called on the Secretary-General to make every effort to resolve the matter. The Group had also taken note of the proposed new and abolished posts in UNMIL and supported the Advisory Committee's observation that it would be ready to consider any additional budgetary requirements that might arise from Security Council authorization of an additional 120 civilian police personnel for UNMIL, as suggested in the Secretary-General's sixth progress report on UNMIL.

86. The African Group was encouraged by the overall progress made by the Mission, ranging from the submission of its financial reports, in which inconsistencies in the Mission's start-up phase had been addressed, to the overall performance report, which was frank and objective. Lastly, as the Mission drew down gradually, every effort must be made to safeguard the gains made.

87. **Ms. Lock** (South Africa) said that the overview report of the Advisory Committee and the findings of the oversight bodies provided a good basis for the Committee's consideration of peacekeeping policy matters under agenda item 123. The implementation of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee and oversight bodies should lead to efficiencies in the financial period beginning 1 July 2005 and guide the Secretariat's preparations for future budget submissions.

88. The demands on United Nations peacekeeping to assist countries emerging from conflict to achieve lasting peace were unprecedented. The United Nations was being called on to expand its peacekeeping role in a number of conflicts around the world, and the scale and complexity of new operations was putting a heavy burden on the resources and capacities of the Organization. Member States must therefore provide the Organization with the resources needed to meet the challenges before it.

89. The complexity of United Nations peacekeeping operations had necessitated further integration across the United Nations system, which was in keeping with the recommendations of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations concerning the need for common approaches and comprehensive strategies. Given the positive impact that an integrated approach had had on resolving the conflict in Sierra Leone, her delegation hoped that the Secretariat would address some of the outstanding matters related to the administration of such an approach, as highlighted by the Advisory Committee.

90. The Committee was afforded an ideal opportunity at the current session to reflect on the implementation of the reforms recommended in the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (A/55/305-S/2000/809), or the Brahimi report. The report of the Secretary-General on implementation of the recommendations of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (A/59/608) had raised the question of whether the United Nations could meet the simultaneous demands of planning, deploying, supporting and managing operations, given the scale and complexity of new operations, and whether the necessary resources could be generated and deployed rapidly enough to support United Nations peacekeeping operations. While the Committee might not be able to answer those questions conclusively, audits conducted by internal and external oversight bodies in conjunction with the Advisory Committee would facilitate assessment of the implementation of reform efforts that fell within the Committee's purview.

91. Significant progress had been made through the Brahimi report to enhance the capacity of Headquarters to plan and manage peacekeeping operations in all their aspects. It was imperative that the changes made at Headquarters were translated into effective work in the field. Her delegation therefore welcomed such developments as improvements in the preparation and submission of budgets, in the methodology for budgeting international staff costs, in the delivery of food rations, and in the management of air operations and utilization of training resources. The measures proposed by the Board of Auditors and the Advisory Committee would lead to further improvements in the overall management of peacekeeping operations.

92. Member States had a shared responsibility to ensure that the United Nations had adequate personnel and funding for rapid deployment of peacekeeping operations. The benefits of having such a capability had been demonstrated in Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Haiti, Liberia and Sudan. Her delegation noted that the Board of Auditors and the Advisory Committee had proposed several measures to improve the functioning of the Logistics Base at Brindisi and the maintenance of strategic deployment stocks. It however regretted that less than 10 per cent of the total value of procurement for the strategic deployment stocks had been awarded to companies from developing countries and countries with economies in transition, which accounted for some two thirds of the Members of the Organization. It therefore urged the Secretariat to comply with the spirit of General Assembly resolution 56/292.

93. With regard to the support account, her Government was in favour of adequate staffing and resources to ensure the effective provision of administrative and logistical support by Headquarters to the field. Her delegation hoped that the additional posts requested in the 2005-2006 budget would alleviate the strain on the Department of Peacekeeping Operations caused by the surge in the level of peacekeeping activity. The analysis of the support account requested by the Advisory Committee should take into account the role played by the Department, within the level of resources approved for the support account, in supporting an increasing number of special political missions.

94. With regard to the financing of specific peacekeeping operations, her delegation fully supported the resource requirements submitted by the Secretary-General for the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE), the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), UNAMSIL and UNMIL. It also wished to acknowledge the important contribution that UNAMSIL had made towards the establishment of UNMIL. The Secretariat had pursued greater cooperation among the peacekeeping operations in Africa, and UNAMSIL, UNMIL and the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) had been increasing the level of information-sharing and the number of regular meetings between military and functional staff. Her delegation was also concerned at the precarious cash position of MINURSO owing to late or non-payment of dues, which was affecting its operations.

95. In conclusion, her delegation paid tribute to the men and women who served in United Nations peacekeeping operations. The United Nations was the most appropriate instrument for creating an environment in conflict areas that enabled communities to shape their own future.

96. **Mr. Elji** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that UNDOF had been established in response to the occupation of the Golan Heights by Israel, which continued to defy Security Council and General Assembly resolutions calling for a complete withdrawal of Israeli forces. Responsibility for

financing UNDOF should therefore fall to the occupying and aggressive Power in accordance with the relevant resolutions.

97. His delegation approved the Advisory Committee's recommendation that the Assembly should accept the Secretary-General's proposal for the financing of UNDOF. It also reiterated the importance of increased dialogue with all peacekeeping partners. His Government had provided UNDOF with every necessary support and appreciated the work being done by the Force and by the Office of the Force Commander. It welcomed cooperation among the parties concerned as well as between the Syrian delegation and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Political Affairs and the Office of the Controller. Lastly, his delegation expressed its appreciation to the countries that contributed troops to UNDOF.

98. **Mr. Sach** (Controller) said that his Office would be considering the important recommendations put forward in the reports of the Advisory Committee and Board of Auditors to strengthen its approach to peacekeeping financing matters. Many delegations had expressed regret over the lack of a report on management structure. The surge in peacekeeping operations since 2003 had made it impossible, however, to devote time to the preparation of such a report. Nevertheless, efforts were continuing within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to lay the groundwork for a review of management structures in peacekeeping operations. A human resource database had been completed by the Personnel Management and Support Service of the Department in November 2004 and since December 2004 work had been done to reconcile the staffing tables and records of the missions with those at Headquarters. An analysis that covered all missions was expected to be completed by July 2005 and the staffing structures of MINUSTAH, UNOCI and ONUB were being reviewed and adjustments made in line with resource requirements. A report on the overview of the financing of United Nations peacekeeping operations would be useful even though it had not been mandated. Other pressing matters, however, such as the completion of financing action for a number of missions and preparing the budgets of all missions for the forthcoming year, had diverted attention from the preparation of the requested report. An overview report was the appropriate framework for discussion and putting forward proposals and his Office expected to revert to such an arrangement at the Assembly's sixtieth session.

99. The requested non-paper on the financing of DDR programmes would be available during informal consultations. Financing would be determined by the extent to which the mandate of the Security Council recognized such programmes as essential to the mission's success. If no extrabudgetary funds were available, the programmes would need to be reflected for assessment purposes.

100. Concerning the complex issue of sexual exploitation and abuse, the Administration was moving in stages. There were provisions in the 2005-2006 budgets for the Personnel Conduct Units. Work was also being done to establish independent investigative capacity within the Organization. Some initial requirements for OIOS were reflected in the support account proposals before the Committee. The work would be expensive and complex and would be discussed at the Assembly's sixtieth session within the broader context of requirements for OIOS.

101. On the issue of the support account, given the stress experienced by the Secretariat, it was not possible to massively expand operations on the ground, without commensurate increases in capacity at Headquarters. The vehicle for such increases was the support account, which was true not only for the Department of Peacekeeping Operations but also for other departments that provided services for peacekeeping. Some delegations had suggested reviewing the issue in the context of the balance between the regular budget and support account provisions for the Department. He recalled that the issue of adding resources under the regular budget or support account had been discussed at length by the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations and that the Committee had decided to work under the support account.

102. On the subject of integrated missions, calls had been made for balancing the arrangements in place for the humanitarian pillar and the financing of the deputy special representatives for humanitarian matters, who were normally financed by UNDP. The approach that had been taken was governed by the broader mandates that the Committee had received from the Security Council. The recognition by the Council that peacebuilding activities required a broad approach had led to the promotion of integrated missions.

103. Turning to the questions posed concerning individual peacekeeping missions, he said that salaries and common staff costs for UNIFIL personnel away on temporary duty assignment to other missions were borne by the missions to which they were assigned. Concerning the medical issues identified by delegations, the Director of the Medical Services Division would shortly undertake a mission to West Africa to evaluate the psychological and psychiatric support provided to contingents at UNMIL and the measures taken to combat the outbreak of Lassa fever at UNAMSIL. The downsizing of the latter Mission was being managed in a way that ensured that essential staff were retained so that the Mission would be in a position to carry out its mandate. He had taken note of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee and the Board of Auditors and looked forward to working with Member States to achieve further progress in strengthening the financing of United Nations peacekeeping operations.

104. **Mr. Elnaggar** (Egypt) said that there was a need to review the timing of the Committee's consideration of peacekeeping budgets, particularly vis-à-vis its discussion of the regular budget. In that connection, it was necessary to take into account not only the status of preparedness of the relevant reports, but also the preparedness of delegations to consider them. The issue was a pressing one, since the Committee had a duty, as the Main Committee of the General Assembly responsible for administrative and budgetary matters, to give proper scrutiny to peacekeeping budgets. At the same time, it was not feasible for the Committee to consider each and every peacekeeping budget in depth. It must therefore provide the Secretariat with policy guidelines for the preparation of those budgets. Similarly, it must give serious thought to policy issues in the context of its consideration of the administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations.

The meeting rose at 12.25 p.m.